



PLEASANT STORIES

&

ANECDOTES



Pleasant Stories & Anecdotes

Narrated by

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi, peace be upon him

Compiled by

Mirza Khalil Ahmad Qamar

ISLAM INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS LTD.



Pleasant Stories & Anecdotes
An English rendering of
Ḥikāyāt-e-Shirīn and Wāqī'āt-e-Shirīn

A collection of various stories and events narrated by
Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi, peace be upon him,
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Compiled by: Mirza Khalil Ahmad Qamar

First English translation published in the UK in 2021

© **Islam International Publications Ltd.**

Published by
Islam International Publications Ltd.
Unit 3, Bourne Mill Business Park,
Guildford Road, Farnham, Surrey UK, GU9 9PS

Printed in the UK at:
Raqeem Press, Surrey, UK

For further information, please visit: www.alislam.org

Cover Design: Absar Butt

ISBN: 978-1-84880-997-0
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

<i>The Promised Messiah^{as}</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	<i>xiii</i>

PART I - PLEASANT STORIES

The Reward of a Virtuous Deed	3
The Conduct of Godly Men.....	4
Do Not Celebrate the Death of an Enemy.....	5
Only Humans Can Become Pious	5
Two Disciples of Sheikh Sa'dī	6
Why have Enmity for the Sake of the World	6
Compassion Towards People of God	7
Story of a Lazy Man	8
True Meaning of Friendship	8
Story of a Parrot	9
Only God Fills Hearts with Awe.....	10
Pretentious Show on the Deathbed	11
Our Proclamation.....	12

About the Inoculation for Plague	12
A Deaf and a Patient	13
Sell Yourself.....	14
Story of a Bald and a Blind	16
Story of a Sage and a Thief.....	18
Rich Cannot Worship.....	19
Counting While Remembering a Loved One	20
Natural Disposition Can be Changed.....	20
The Hospitality of a Bird.....	21
Boasting About Not Committing a Sin.....	22
Respecting Even a Fake Mendicant.....	22
Humility	23
Features of a Physician	24
Annals of a Jew Embracing Islam	24
The Reward for a Very Small Virtue	25
Learn Fidelity from a Dog	25
Harms of Greed in Alchemy.....	27
Not Until God Opens the Eyes.....	28
Condition of the Rich	29
Difference Between the Looks of Love & Enmity .	30
One of the Two will Die.....	31
The Finest Example of Craftsmanship	31
God does not Let Anyone's Virtuous Deed Go to Waste.....	32
Preaching and Actions of a Cleric	33

PART II - PLEASANT ANECDOTES

Perform Good Deeds in Secret.....	37
Hardships and Trials	38
Virtuous Deeds are Never Wasted	39
Inviting a Noble.....	40
Three Pilgrimages.....	41
Action of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa	42
Contentment	42
Forty Lamps	43
Attraction of Piety	43
Death of a Believer.....	44
Intention	45
Watch Out for Attacks by Satan.....	46
Just A Little Matter	46
Humility and Meekness	47
The Virtuous and the Wretched	48
Selection of a Friend.....	48
Why Did You Backbite.....	49
Success in Difficulty	49
Delhi is Still Far Away.....	50
For Your Sake.....	51
Wrath of God on a King.....	51
Death of a Beggar.....	52
Do not go for Appearance	53
Standard of a Miracle	53
The Manifestation of Divine Power.....	54
Blessings of a Father's Good Deed	55

Condition of prayer.....	57
Weapon of Prayers	57
Prayers with Fervour	58
A Way of Bonding	58
One Method of Acceptance of Prayer.....	59
Eagerness to Earn Blessings	59
Avoid Show-off.....	60
When God Wills	63
Converting a Thief into a Saint.....	64
Consolation by a King.....	66
Do not Rush to Suspicion.....	67
Cognition of God.....	68
Perseverance	68

<i>Publisher's Note</i>	71
<i>Glossary</i>	75



Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi^{as}

THE PROMISED MESSIAH ^{as}



Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} was born in 1835 in Qadian, India. From his early life, he dedicated himself to prayer, and the study of the Holy Quran and other scriptures. He was deeply pained to observe the plight of Islam, which was being attacked from all directions. In order to defend Islam and present its teachings in their pristine purity, he wrote more than ninety books, thousands of letters, and participated in many religious debates. He argued that Islam is a living faith, which can lead man to establish communion with God and achieve moral and spiritual perfection.

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} started experiencing divine dreams, visions, and revelations at a young age. In 1889, under divine command, he started accepting initiation into the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The divine revelations continued to increase and he was commanded by God to announce that God had appointed him to be the same Reformer of the Latter Days as prophesied by various religions under different titles.

He claimed to be the same Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sas}. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is now established in more than 200 countries.

After his demise in 1908, the institution of *Khilāfat* (successorship) was established to succeed him, in fulfilment of the prophecies made in the Holy Quran and by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sas}. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba} is the Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah^{as} and the present head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

FOREWORD



The two books *Ḥikāyāt-e-Shīrīn* (Pleasant Stories) and *Wāqīāt-e-Shīrīn* (Pleasant Anecdotes) were compiled by Mirza Khalil Ahmad Qamar from the auspicious verbal narratives of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be upon him), the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which he presented in his blessed meetings and gatherings from time to time.

The goal of the series of stories given in this book is for the youth to develop a love and appreciation for the faith inspiring events related to revered personalities mentioned in these books. It is also hoped that the examples of righteousness found in these pages inspire the reader to cultivate a personal relationship with the Almighty Allah.

These books were originally published in Urdu which have been combined under the title of *Pleasant Stories & Anecdotes*. We are grateful to Dr Mahmud Ahmad Nagi and Dr Wajeeh Bajwa of USA for preparing the English translation which was reviewed by Qamar Ahmad Zafar and Syed Sajid Ahmad. Final review and

formatting was done by Sabahat Ahmad Cheema of Additional Wakālat Taṣnīf. May Allah bless all the contributors. *Āmīn*.

All references from Malfūzāt have been taken from the ten-volume 1984 edition.

I hope that this book shall be beneficial for the English readers, in particular youth of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Al-Ḥāj Munir-ud-Din Shams
Additional Wakīlut-Taṣnīf, London
November 2021

Part One

PLEASANT STORIES

(Hikāyāt-e-Shirīn)

The Reward of a Virtuous Deed

We should only worship that Almighty God, who rewards even for a little work.

A story goes that once three men were trapped in a mountain. They had taken refuge in a cave when a rock fell in front of the cave, blocking the exit.

Upon this, they said, 'Now only our virtuous deeds will rescue us'.

One of them said, 'Once I hired a few workmen. One of them left before the payment was made. I searched for him, but he could not be found. I bought a goat from his wages that multiplied into a herd in a few years' time. One day that person appeared and said that he had worked for me and that it will be my kindness to pay for his labour. I handed over the whole herd to him. O Allah! If You liked my virtuous act, then ease my difficulty for me'. The rock elevated slightly.

The second person then narrated his story and said, 'O Allah! Ease my difficulty if You liked my virtuous act'. The rock elevated a little more.

The third person described his story, 'My mother was old. One night she asked for a glass of water. By the time I brought the water, she was already asleep. I did not wake her fearing that she

would be uncomfortable. I stood the whole night with the glass of water. I gave her the water when she woke up in the morning. O Allah! Remove my difficulty if You liked my virtuous act’

The rock then moved enough to let them escape. The Almighty Allah rewarded all of them for their virtuous deeds.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 26–27)

The Conduct of Godly Men

I am reminded of an anecdote written by Sa’dī in his book *Būstān*, in which he states that once a noble man was bitten by a dog. When he returned home, his home-folk noticed the dog bite.

A simple and innocent girl who was present said: ‘Why did you not bite the dog in revenge?’ The man responded: ‘Humans cannot behave like dogs.’

Similarly, when a person is abused and cursed by a wretch, it is incumbent upon a believer to abstain from responding in kind. Otherwise, this example of dog-like behaviour shall be applicable to such people.

The beloved of God have been abused with the worst of invectives and are grieved in the worst possible manner. However, they were always addressed in the following words:

وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ¹

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 103)

1. Turn away from the ignorant (*Sūrah al-A’rāf*, 7:200). [Publisher]

Do Not Celebrate the Death of an Enemy

Even if an enemy of yours meets their death, so what? And if he remains alive, then what? To cause benefit or harm lies within the power and control of the Almighty God. No human being can cause harm to another.

Sa'dī has written an anecdote in his *Gulistān* that someone brought the good news to Nusherwan that a certain enemy of his had been killed, and that his country and fortress had been taken over by Nusherwan's forces.

Nusherwan gave a marvellous response:

*The death of my enemy brings me no joy;
For even our own life is not forever.*

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 359)

Only Humans Can Become Pious

The condition of man during his childhood indicates that man also is born like animals such as cows and bulls; except that one of the good traits in man's nature is that he leaves evil and adopts good. This virtue is only present in humans. Animals do not have an aptitude for learning.

Sa'dī has also written a story in poetic form and stated that a fool tried to educate a donkey. He worked on it day and night. A wise person asked him, 'O Fool! What are you doing? And why are you wasting your time and intellect for nothing? You cannot

turn a donkey into a human, but in this process, you may become a donkey yourself’.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 266–267)

Two Disciples of Sheikh Sa’dī

A flaw of someone should only be mentioned after supplicating fervently for at least forty days...

Sheikh Sa’dī had two disciples. One of them proclaimed wisdom, whereas the other suffered in jealousy. Eventually, the first disciple told Sa’dī, ‘When I give an account of wisdom, he becomes jealous and envious’.

Sheikh Sa’dī replied, ‘He chose the path to hell on account of jealousy, and you became a backbiter’.

Thus, this community cannot prosper unless there prevails mercy, prayer, forbearance, and grace among its members.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 79)

Why have Enmity for the Sake of the World

The world and its material things have no such value which should cause you to have enmity towards others. Sheikh Sa’dī (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated a wonderful story.

Two individuals had enmity towards each other. They even detested each other’s existence under the same sky. One of them

passed away, and the other was very happy. One day he visited the other person's grave and opened it. He saw that this individual's delicate body is covered in dust and is being eaten by insects.

On seeing this, he visualised the sad end of the world and started to cry. He cried so much that the earth covering the grave became wet. He closed the grave and wrote the following sentence on it:

*Do not be happy with the death of someone;
no one is likely to live in this world forever.*

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 218)

Compassion Towards People of God

Sheikh Sa'dī (may Allah have mercy on him) writes that a king fell ill with an annoying disease. He requested for prayers that may the Bountiful God heal him.

Sheikh Sa'dī replied, 'There may be thousands of innocent people imprisoned in your jail. How can my prayer be accepted against their curses?' The king set the prisoners free, and then he became healthy.

This means that if compassion is shown for the people of God, then God also shows His mercy.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 369)

Story of a Lazy Man

I remember a story about a foolish man. As the story goes, a foolish man had a water pot with a hole in it. Whenever he would go to answer the call of nature, before he could manage to relieve himself and then subsequently clean himself, all the water would drain out of his pot.

Finally, after many days of thought and reflection, the bright solution that he came up with was that he began to clean himself with the water first, before relieving himself; and he was very pleased with his solution. [My opponent] has come up with an insight and solution that is as clever as this foolish man.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 177)

True Meaning of Friendship

Stealing is a bad habit; however, to use something that belongs to a friend, (if they are indeed good friends), without permission is not as indecent.

Two individuals had a remarkable friendship. They were beneficent to each other. One of them went on a journey. One day the other came to his friend's house. He inquired from his friend's slave girl about his friend. She told him that he had gone on a journey. He asked whether she had the key to the safe. She replied in affirmative. He asked for the key, opened the safe, and took some cash out of it.

When the homeowner returned, the slave girl informed him

that his friend had visited in his absence. The homeowner became very worried and asked, ‘What did he say?’ The slave girl replied, ‘He asked me for the key to the safe. He opened the safe himself and took some money from the safe and left’.

The homeowner was ecstatic and proud of the act of the slave girl. He freed the slave girl because she complied with the demand of his friend and did not disappoint him. He said, ‘I free you today as a reward for performing such a noble deed’.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 268)

Story of a Parrot

Saints say that it is necessary for every person who wishes to meet God that he must pass through the gate of death.

A story is related in *Mathnawī* to explain this point that there was a man who had a parrot. As he prepared to go on a journey, he asked the parrot if it had something to say. The parrot said, ‘If you happen to pass a certain place, you will find a big tree. There will be many parrots on it. Convey my message to them that they are very fortunate to lead a free life in the open, whereas I am unfortunate to be in prison’.

When the man reached that particular tree, he delivered the message to the parrots. One of the parrots fell from the tree and fluttered to death. The man felt extremely sorry for causing the parrot’s death. However, he could do nothing except to remain patient.

When he returned from his journey, he narrated the whole

story to his parrot and expressed grief for the dead parrot. On hearing this, his parrot also fell in the cage and fluttered to its death. The man was very grieved again that he had caused two deaths.

He took the dead parrot out of the cage and threw it away. The parrot that was assumed dead and thrown out from the cage flew off and sat on a wall. The parrot said that in reality, neither that parrot nor I had died. I had asked the parrots for a way to be free from this prison. So, that parrot showed me that true freedom is achieved through death. So, I assumed death and attained freedom.

Thus, it is true that the one who is tangled in the urgings of the inciting self, cannot be free from [this prison] without death.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 96)

Only God Fills Hearts with Awe

It is a vice for the religious scholars to wish for worldly fame. It is not the task of the human beings to place magnificence [of a sage] in someone's heart. This magnificence is an attraction that emanates from the Will of God. What are we doing that thousands of individuals are attracted to us; it is only God's attraction. Knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of these individuals had nothing to do with it.

A story is written in *Mathnawī* that there was a wealthy man, but unfortunately, he had very little intellect. He was going on a journey. He loaded his donkey with a sack of jewels on one side of

the saddle and added a bag of sand on the other side of the saddle to balance the load. On the way, a wise man met him who was famished, wearing ragged clothes and no turban on his head. He advised the wealthy man, 'Why did you not load half the jewels on each side? You are hurting the animal unnecessarily.'

The wealthy man replied, 'I do not wish to use your intellect. Misfortune is associated with your intellect. Therefore, I do not accept the advice of an unfortunate person like you.'

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 384)

Pretentious Show on the Deathbed

Until a person becomes a true believer, their acts of virtue, irrespective of how magnificent they may be, cannot be free from the gild of ostentation...

On one occasion, Khawaja Sahib related a narration to me and I have read this story myself as well. When Sir Philip Sidney was wounded in the siege of the fort at Zutphen in the Netherlands during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in his throes of death, at a time of intense thirst, a small vessel of water was brought for him.

At the time, water was scarce. Another wounded soldier lay nearby and he too was terribly thirsty. The soldier began to look at Sir Philip Sidney with intense longing and desire.

Upon noticing the soldier's wish, Sidney did not drink the water himself, but rather gave it to the soldier as an act of selflessness, saying: 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine.'

Even in the face of death people do not refrain from

ostentation. Often those who wish to establish or portray themselves as possessing sublime morals do perform such deeds.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 213)

Our Proclamation

The existence of adversaries is our advertisement. It is their favour that they continue to propagate.

It is written in *Mathnawī* that a thief was stealing from a house. A man saw the thief from the top of his house and said, ‘What are you doing?’ The thief replied, ‘I am beating a drum.’ The man replied, ‘There is no sound from your drumming.’ The thief replied, ‘The sound of this drumming shall be heard in the morning, and everyone will hear it.’

People who oppose me also make noise in the same manner, which in turn informs more people about me.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 371–372)

About the Inoculation for Plague

Vaccination for protection from the plague was under discussion.

Ḥaḍrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan^{ra} said, ‘How many people can the vaccination reach?’

Upon this, the Promised Messiah^{as} smiled and said:

This is the very parable whose depiction is recorded in

Mathnawī that the mother of a man was an adulteress. He murdered her. The people asked, ‘Why did you kill your mother? You should have killed her lovers’.

He replied, ‘How many could I have killed, one, two, or how many more? It was befitting just to kill her’.

This is the very situation with the vaccine.

(*Malfūzāt*, vol. 4, p. 80)

A Deaf and a Patient

When we see the human kind as civilized then why should we not consider civilization as its root?...

Should God have shown the first example a pretentious show, virtuous or a sample of evil and contention, that God created him evil, but then he slowly became civilized? Such thought is audacity and an insult to the dignity of the Almighty God.

It is the same example as described in *Mathnawī* about a deaf person who visited a sick person to inquire about his health. He thought that first, he will ask about this person’s health and when the patient will reply, ‘I am OK’, he shall say, ‘All praise to Allah’. Then he will ask him, ‘What do you eat?’ Upon this he will say, ‘I eat lentil’, and I shall reply by saying, ‘Very good’. Then he shall inquire, ‘Who is your doctor?’ and he will reply, ‘Such and such is my doctor’, to which I will then say, ‘He is a good doctor and takes care of his patients’.

When he went to inquire about the patient [the conversation went like this]:

Deaf: 'How are you?'

Patient: 'I am dying.'

Deaf: '*Alḥamdulillāh*, All praise to Allah.'

Deaf: 'What food you are taking?'

Patient: 'Blood of my liver.'

Deaf: 'It is good food.'

Deaf: 'Who is your doctor?'

Patient: 'Angel of death.'

Deaf: 'He is a good doctor and has cure for his patients.'

These people [who have misgivings about the creation of God] are in a similar situation.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 417–418)

Sell Yourself

A young man said to Ḥaḍrat Mūsā (peace be upon him), 'If I understand the languages of animals, I shall learn some lesson from them.'

Ḥaḍrat Mūsā told him, 'Awareness and awakening cannot be achieved without the blessings of God, therefore, forget about this idea as there is danger involved in this effort'. However, the interest of the young man intensified even more after Mūsā's prohibition, and he greatly pursued Mūsā.

Ḥaḍrat Mūsā concluded that Satan had deceived the young man. He will be at a loss if I teach him these languages, and if I do not, then he will develop doubts.

God told Ḥaḍrat Mūsā to teach him the languages of the animals. Therefore, Ḥaḍrat Mūsā taught him the languages of dogs and roosters.

The next day, for experience, the man paid due attention to the voices uttered by his dog and rooster.

The maidservant dusted a tablecloth and crumbs from last night's leftovers fell to the floor. The rooster picked them up and devoured them instantly.

The dog said to the rooster, 'You have been unfair to me as you can eat grains etc. whereas I cannot'. The rooster said, 'You should not worry. You shall be getting better than these leftover crumbs. The horse of the homeowner is going to die and who shall eat that meat other than the dogs'.

On hearing this conversation, the young man immediately sold his horse and was saved from the loss.

The next day another similar event occurred. The rooster ate the crumbs again, and the same conversation took place between the two. The rooster told the dog, 'Undoubtedly the horse died at another place as it was traded off. However, you need not worry as his camel is going to die tomorrow and you shall have a feast'.

The man sold the camel too. The third day, the same incident took place, and the dog blamed the rooster again. The rooster repeated a similar response. 'The camel was sold too and died at some other place. Nothing to worry as now his slave will die tomorrow, and on his death, his relatives and dogs will be served with good food'.

The man sold the slave too. The rooster was greatly ashamed for the fourth consecutive day. It said to the dog, 'Do not think what I said was a lie. The news I shared was correct. Our nation is

trustworthy and custodian of the time, even when we are caged, we still raise a call to Prayers at a specified time. Whatever has passed, is history. He will die himself now, and you will see enjoyment. He would have saved himself if he had not worried about his horse, camel and the slave. He took care of his wealth but did not take care of his soul. Dervish enhance their spiritual lives through devotion to spiritual exertion and exercise’.

The rooster discussed the subject in a befitting manner and explained how humans could save themselves from ills. Now this person is going to die, as he did not care about his soul.

The homeowner was frightened and went running to Ḥaḍrat Mūsā, who told the man to save himself by trading his own self now. ‘You saved your wealth by transferring your losses to others. Now, what are you going to do? You cannot save yourself at this point from death; you should straighten your faith. If you die as a pious man, you will not die but remain alive. A believer never dies; he remains alive’.

The young man became a true believer and saved himself from spiritual death.

(Ḥayāt-e-Aḥmad, vol. 1, Part 2, p. 232–234, 2013 edition)

Story of a Bald and a Blind

There were two men, one was blind, and the other was bald. God’s angel appeared in the form of a man before the bald man and asked him, ‘What do you wish for?’ The bald man said that he would like to have hair and be wealthy. The angel passed his

hand over his head, and by the Grace of God, hair grew on the bald man's head. The bald man also became wealthy and gained servants.

Then the angel went to the blind man and asked, 'What do you wish for?' The blind man asked for eyesight so that he does not stumble around. He wished for wealth as well so that he was not dependent on anyone. The angel passed his hand over his eyes, and his vision was restored. He was also given wealth.

Later on, with God's command, the same angel, in the disguise of a beggar, appeared to the bald and the blind to test them. He begged the bald man for alms. The bald man responded in a harsh tone and rebuffed: 'Be off. Many beggars like you wander around'. The angel passed his hand over the head of the bald, turning him bald again. He lost all his wealth and became penniless.

The same angel came to the blind, too, in the form of a beggar, who had become wealthy and had regained his eyesight. The angel asked for charity. The blind said, 'Everything that I have is given to me by the Almighty God and is His property. You take it all'. The Almighty God blessed him with even more wealth.

Moral of the story: My dear children! You must remember to thank God for whatever He has bestowed on you and appreciate what has been given to you. Never rebuff anyone who asks for alms. Charity is a bliss. The one who asks for help, he must be given his due share. God is then delighted and multiplies His blessings.

(Ḥayāt-e-Aḥmad, vol. 1, Part 2, p. 241–242, 2013 edition)

Story of a Sage and a Thief

A sage was travelling, and he happened to pass through a forest where a thief lived who used to rob the travellers. As per his habit, when he was about to rob this holy man, the sage said:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ¹

That is, your provision is stored in the heavens. Trust in God and become righteous. Abandon theft. God, Himself shall fulfil your needs.

The advice affected the heart of the robber. He let the sage go and acted on his advice.

The robber started getting lavish food in gold and silver platters. He threw the platters outside his hut after his meals. Incidentally, the same sage passed by again. The robber who had become a pious and righteous person described all his inner state to the sage and asked, 'Relate to me another verse.'

The sage recited:

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ²

Hearing these sacred words had such effect on him that the greatness of God settled on his heart, and he passed away in that state.

My dear ones! You noticed what blessings are gained through trust in God, and what wealth is attained through adopting

1. *Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt*, 51:23 [Publisher]

2. And by the Lord of the Heaven and the earth, it is certainly the truth. (*Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt*, 51:24). [Publisher]

righteousness. Ponder on the fact that the God Who takes care of those living on the earth and in the heavens, can there be any doubt or suspicion about His existence?

It is that Holy and True God who brings us up. Therefore, fear Him only, trust Him only, and adopt righteousness.

(Ḥayāt-e-Aḥmad, vol. 1, Part 2, p. 243, 2013 edition)

Rich Cannot Worship

There was a Nawab who did not get up for morning prayers. A cleric encouraged him to pray, so the Nawab asked his servant to wake him up in the morning. Next morning, the servant tried to wake him up a few time.

When the servant first attempted to awaken him, he turned his side. When the servant went to the other side of the bed to wake him up, he turned again to the previous side. When the servant tried to wake him the third time, he got up and beat him up and said, ‘O dunce, when I did not wake up at first then did you not realize that I would not want to get up, yet why do you keep waking me up?’ The Nawab beat him so much that the servant lost consciousness.

The Nawab himself, on the encouragement of the cleric, had asked the servant to be woken up; however, when his servant tried to do so, he was punished. The reason for this is that the owners of large estates become so negligent that they do not think about the rights of God. The rich carry a lot of arrogance in them due to which they are unable to worship.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 53–54)

Counting While Remembering a Loved One

A person who remembers the Almighty God with love and true devotion does not count [how many times he remembers God]. He remembers Him without counting.

The story of a woman is well known. She loved someone. She saw a mendicant carrying a rosary passing it over his hand. The woman asked him, 'What are you doing?' He said, 'I am remembering my Friend'. The woman exclaimed, 'Remembering a friend, and that too while counting it?'

In fact, it is very true. Why count when remembering a Friend? In reality, unless the remembrance of God is abundant, the pleasure and devotion that results from remembrance cannot be achieved.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 19)

Natural Disposition Can be Changed

It is said that Plato was known for his knowledge of intellect. He posted a doorkeeper at his gate who was ordered to describe any individual who wished to see him. Plato would then judge the morals of the individual based on the description provided to him and decide whether or not to grant an audience based on his judgment of the individual's description.

A person arrived for an audience with Plato, and the doorkeeper provided the man's description to him. Plato refused to meet him after reviewing the visitor's description. The man asked

the doorkeeper to tell Plato that he was right in his interpretation of him; however, he had changed his natural disposition by the power of self-abnegation. Plato granted him an audience.

Thus, the natural disposition is such a thing that can be changed.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 128–129)

The Hospitality of a Bird

There is a story about the hospitality of a bird. A traveller came to rest under a tree at night in the wilderness of the forest during winter. There was a nest of a bird in the tree. Both male and female birds started conversing with each other. ‘This man away from home is our guest tonight. He is in the cold. What can we do for him?’ After some thought, they agreed to break and throw down their nest so that he could make fire from it and warm himself. Then they thought that he was hungry and wondered how to provide him with food. Nothing was available at that time. Both birds dropped themselves into the fire so that their guest could have dinner with their roasted meat.

Thus, they created an example of hospitality [by sacrificing their home and then their lives to help a stranger].

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 281–282)

Boasting About Not Committing a Sin

A story was narrated to me by someone, and it is true.

A person invited someone to a feast. He treated his guest lavishly. When the guest finished his meal, the host said to him with humbleness and humility, 'I could not serve you according to your status. I hope you will forgive me'.

The guest thought that the host was boasting about his favour. He said, 'I have also done a great favour to you. You do not recognize it!'

The host asked what favour his guest bestowed on him.

The guest said, 'While you were busy preparing meal, I could have set your house on fire. I did a great favour to you by not setting it on fire'.

This is an example of an evil deed that he did not cause grievous harm by burning his house. Some people boast about not committing evil. Such people are like animals. In the eyes of God, only those people are worthy of honour which do not boast about not committing evil; rather, they do not boast even about doing a good deed.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 378)

Respecting Even a Fake Mendicant

It is narrated that a fire worshipper sat at one place for forty years worshipping fire. After forty years, when he rose from that place, people started using dirt from under his feet to cure eye infections.

A saint became worried when he saw this and wondered how a falsifier was bestowed such a miracle. He was uncertain about this matter.

Then he heard a voice, ‘Why are you worried; just know that God did not waste the labour of an untrue and misled individual. Imagine what will be the reward if a truthful person tries to approach Him, and how much reward will he be bestowed?’

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 246–247)

Humility

Politeness and humility are excellent qualities. A person who is arrogant, despite being needy cannot achieve his wish. He should adopt humility.

It is narrated that physician Galen was employed by a king. The king was in the habit of eating unhealthy food, and therefore, Galen believed that the king would contract epilepsy. He always tried to stop the king from eating unhealthy food, but the king did not desist.

Galen was frustrated and left for his native town. After some time, symptoms of epilepsy started appearing on the body of the king. The king realized his mistake and adopted humility. He handed his throne to his son and left that place wearing simple clothes and reached Galen. Galen recognized the king and liked his humility. Galen treated the king with the utmost attention, and the Almighty God granted health to the king.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 286–287)

Features of a Physician

What difference does it make whether a physician makes a mistake or is unsuccessful in treating someone? His job was to show empathy, not to fight destiny.

It is narrated that a physician would put on a veil while going to a graveyard. Somebody asked him, 'Why do you do so?' The physician replied that all those people had died from his prescriptions.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 340)

Annals of a Jew Embracing Islam

There is a story about a Jew named Abul-Khair who was a well-known physician. Once he was passing through a town alley when he heard somebody reciting:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ¹

Although he was a Jew, he leaned against a wall with his hands, bowed his head and started crying. Afterwards, he went home and while asleep, he dreamt that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) visited him and said, 'O Abul-Khair, it is strange that a person with dignity and grace like you

1. Do men think that they will be left alone because they say, 'We believe,' and they will not be tried? (*Sūrah al-Ankabūt*, 29:3). [Publisher]

is not a Muslim'. When he woke up in the morning, he made a public announcement in the city that he was embracing the religion of Islam.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 201)

The Reward for a Very Small Virtue

A Jew said to someone, 'I shall teach you magic with the condition that you will not do any good deed'. That individual could not learn the magic within the agreed number of days. The Jew said: 'You must have done some good deed during these days, and due to which you could not learn the magic'.

The man said, 'I did not perform any good deed except that I picked up a thorn from the pathway'.

The Jew remarked, 'Yes, this is why you have not been able to learn the magic'.

Then the man said, 'It is a great mercy of the Almighty God that I am saved from committing a great sin by doing a very small virtue'.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 26)

Learn Fidelity from a Dog

It is narrated that a Jew embraced Islam. After a few days he faced difficult times, and he starved and suffered from hunger, he went

to the house of a Jew to ask for help. The Jew gave this new Muslim four pieces of flatbread.

A dog followed him as he returned with the flatbreads. Thinking that perhaps there is a share of the dog in these flatbreads, he threw one flatbread to the dog and continued onward. The dog quickly ate the flatbread and continued following him. He assumed perhaps there might be half of the flatbreads as a share for the dog. He threw another flatbread before the dog which the dog ate and continued to follow him. As he realized that the dog is not leaving him alone, he then assumed perhaps three-quarters of the share was for the dog and the rest for him. Therefore, he threw another flatbread to the dog, but the dog did not go away even after eating that flatbread.

He became very angry at the dog and said, 'You are wicked; I begged and got four flatbreads. You have eaten three of them and are still are not leaving me alone.'

At that moment, the Almighty God granted the dog the ability to speak, and the dog said, 'I am not wicked. I do not go anywhere other than my master's house for food; no matter how much I may starve. You are wicked as you went to beg from an infidel after you had starved for just two or three days.'

On hearing this response from the dog, the Muslim became very remorseful on his condition.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 450)

Harms of Greed in Alchemy

Many people waste their life in search of miracles from alchemy. These individuals lose all their possessions for nothing rather than gaining anything useful.

There was a man from Batala. He lived hand-to-mouth. He built a house with a single layer of the brick wall, and the inside of the house was made with mud walls.

One day he met a mendicant man who remained busy reciting chants on beads. He looked to be a pious man. The simple man developed a relationship with this man and kept his company due to his sacred appearance.

One day the holy man genuinely asked, 'Why have you built your house like this, and why did you not build the whole house with solid bricks?'

The man replied, 'I am a poor man and have no money.'

The holy man said, 'Why to worry about the money?' and then kept quiet. The man thought about this double-meaning response and inquired, 'Do you know alchemy?'

The holy man replied, 'My teacher knew alchemy'. After insistence from the simple man, the holy man reluctantly said that he also knew alchemy, 'I do not tell this secret to anybody, I am only telling you this secret because of your insistence'.

The mendicant man persuaded him to collect jewellery from his house, while he himself went to the wilderness for a while and engaged in meditation.

The holy man somehow stole the jewellery by pretending to put it in a cooking pot and filled the cooking pot with pieces of bricks and stones and left the scene for further meditation. When

leaving, he said to the simple man, 'Cover the cooking pot with firewood, light the fire and do not remove the pot from the fire lest the contents are uncooked, and do not touch the pot till I return'.

The simple man followed the instructions and placed the cooking pot on a big fire. Smoke from the fire spread all around, and neighbours gathered and entered his home to find out what was going on. He told people that gold was being minted using alchemy.

The people explained to him that the holy man had looted him. When the simple man removed the lid of the pot, there were pieces of bricks and stones in the pot.

After that, the simple man visited Gurdaspur for some reason; he came to know that the same holy man had swindled somebody else as well. The fire was still burning. The simple man told this person in Gurdaspur that he also had been robbed. Similar pieces of bricks and stones were also found in his cooking pot.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 10, p. 163–164)

Not Until God Opens the Eyes

Prophets are under the protection of the Almighty God. None can recognize them until God makes them manifest...

It is narrated that King Mahmood arrested a ruler and took him with him. After living with the king for a while, the ruler embraced Islam after comparing Islam with his religion.

The ruler lived in a separate tent. One day the ruler was sitting

crying in his tent that Mahmood passed by and heard him crying and entered the tent. King Mahmood inquired whether he was missing his homeland and if so, he would send him back as the ruler of that land.

The ruler replied, 'I do not desire the world at the moment. I am thinking how will I face the question on the Day of Judgment as to what kind of a Muslim am I that I did not embrace Islam till Mahmood attacked and brought me with him. How fortunate would it have been had I understood early on that Islam was the true religion?'

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 404–405)

Condition of the Rich

The condition of rich is such that they sit in comfort while the fan is available, and the servant serves them tea. The servant is chastised if there is any minute deficiency in it, whether sugar in the tea is less or more, they become filled with rage and are angry with the servant. When they are extremely angry, they even start beating their servants...

They do not realize that just as the servant is also a human being and can make a mistake or can commit omission, so is the rich also a human being.

I remember a story about King Hārūn ar-Rashīd. He had a housemaid. One day as she made the king's bed, she found it fluffy, soft, and perfumed. She thought of lying on the bed to find out how comfortable it was. She laid on the bed and fell asleep.

The king arrived and was very angry to see her sleeping in his bed. She was punished with lashes.

When she was being punished, she cried as well as laughed at the same time. The king asked her the reason for this. She said, 'I am crying due to the pain inflicted by the lashes; I am laughing just thinking that I have been given this punishment for sleeping in this bed just for a few moments; only God knows how much punishment those will receive who always sleep in this comfort'.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 114–115)

Difference Between the Looks of Love and Enmity

A pious man said to King Mahmood, 'The fire of Hell is forbidden for one who sees me once'. King Mahmood said, 'Your claim is loftier than the claim of the Holy Prophet of God (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). The non-believers like Abū Lahab and Abū Jahl saw him; however, the fire of Hell was not forbidden for them'.

The pious man said, 'O king, do you not know that God has said:

يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ¹

1. You see them looking towards you, but they see not (*Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:199). [Publisher]

If these people saw and considered him a liar, then, in reality, they did not see him...

If an observer looks with the eyes of love and conviction, then, certainly, there is an effect. The one who looks with hostility and enmity does not succeed to acquire faith.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 66)

One of the Two will Die

There is a famous story that a woman had two daughters. One was married to someone near the bank of a river, and other was married to someone living in a high-altitude area.

The woman was always worried that one of her daughters would die. If it rained too much, then the one living beside the river will die, and if it did not rain, then the one living in the high-altitude area will lose her life.

Same would be the condition at the advent of the *Hakam* [Judge].

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 32)

The Finest Example of Craftsmanship

A king asked one of the highly talented craftsmen to present a sample of his best craftsmanship such that he himself would not be able to create anything more remarkable than that. The king

also asked another highly skilled craftsman to present a sample of his best craftsmanship. The king put a curtain between the two.

The first craftsman built a wall and decorated it to the highest quality of the art and prepared a masterpiece of the highest level of human skill. The second craftsman erected a wall without any decoration. The wall was very clear, polished that exceeded a clear mirror in its burnish.

The king asked the first craftsman to present his creation. The craftsman presented wall decorated with beautiful artwork. All present were spellbound to see the masterpiece. The king then asked the second craftsman to show his work. The second craftsman requested the king to remove the curtain between the two sections. The king had the curtain removed. People saw that there was an exactly similar wall standing on the other side as the first craftsman had raised as, due to the removal of the curtain, the decorations of the first wall appeared on the second wall with absolutely no difference.

(*Sīrat-ul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 275–276, 2008 edition)

God does not Let Anyone's Virtuous Deed Go to Waste

We should worship that God who bestows reward for the smallest virtuous deed. God is the one who rewards humans even if they give even a sip of water to someone.

Once a woman was travelling through a forest. She saw a thirsty dog on the way. She weaved a rope from her hair and

fetches some water from a well and quenches the thirst of the dog. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that God had accepted her act and will forgive all her sins although she had been sinful all her life.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 26)

Preaching and Actions of a Cleric

Look at the clerics of today. They preach others but do not follow their own advice. That is why they are not trusted at all.

Once there was a cleric preaching and his wife was also among the audience. He preached about charity, alms and salvation in his sermon. His sermon moved a woman and she removed one of her gold anklets and donated it to him.

Upon this, the cleric said, 'O Noblewoman! Do you wish that your other ankle burns in Hell?' On hearing this, the woman handed over her second anklet as well.

When the cleric arrived home, his wife also desired to give charity for the needy people. The cleric said, 'Such sermons are only for preaching and are not meant for your action. If we do not make requests like this, then our livelihood will be affected'.

There is a simile depicting the activities of such people:

Preachers put up magnificent shows while standing at the pulpit

They engage in quite different activities when they are in seclusion.

(Malfūzāt vol. 5, p. 316)

Part Two

PLEASANT ANECDOTES

(Wāqi‘āt-e-Shirīn)

Perform Good Deeds in Secret

It is mentioned in *Tadhkiratul-Auliya'* that there was a person who wanted to be considered trustworthy, pious, regular in prayers and an observer of fasts. He offered his prayers with this intention and performed virtuous deeds. However, wherever he went and whichever way he passed, people used to say look at this hypocrite who wishes to present himself as a pious man.

One day he thought, why am I ruining my hereafter. God knows when I will die, so why am I creating this curse for myself? I have not offered even one prayer for the sake of God.

He wholeheartedly repented with genuine sincerity and truthfulness. He decided to perform all good deeds in secret and not to do anything to show off. This change was not verbal only; he began acting accordingly, and a pious change took place within him.

It is written that outwardly he made himself to appear as if he did not pray and that he was a dirty and wicked person. However, he engaged in virtuous deeds in secret. Wherever he went, adults and children started calling him a righteous and pious person; God's beloved and chosen person.

The moral of this story is that true acceptance is bestowed from Heaven. The saints and pious people keep their good deeds

a secret. They consider it a fault to disclose their faithfulness and truthfulness to others. However, sometimes they share certain necessary matters as permitted by Shariah or disclose some matters for educating others.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 249–250)

Hardships and Trials

Once, Bāyazīd^{rtā} was exhorting the people in a gathering. The descendant of a long line of saints, who harboured malice in his heart for Bayazīd^{rtā}, was also present. It is the way of God that He chooses newer families for older ones. For example, he selected the Children of Ishmael over the Children of Israel, as the latter had fallen prey to worldly pleasures and enjoyment, and thus had forgotten God.

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ¹

So, the thought crossed this person's mind that Bāyazīd^{rtā} belonged to a lower-class family. How then could he possibly be a man of miracles who attracted so many people to himself? The other man realised that people did not flock to him the same way.

The Almighty God disclosed the thoughts of this man to Bayazīd^{rtā} and so, he began to relate a story.

1. And such days We cause to alternate among men that they may be admonished. (*Sūrah Āl-e-Imrān*, 3:141). [Publisher]

He said that once, in a gathering, a lamp containing oil diluted with water was burning at night. The oil and water began to quarrel. The water addressed the oil and said: ‘You are heavier and dirtier than I, yet despite your thickness you float up above me. For I am a pure and refined substance that is used for cleansing purposes, but I still remain below you. Why is this so?’

The oil responded: ‘You have not experienced even minutely the degree of difficulty that I have endured. It is for this reason that I have attained this lofty position. There was a time when I was sown in the earth, I remained hidden and was humbled. Then, by the will of God I began to grow, and had not grown much before I was cut down. After great pains, I was then refined. Further still, I was ground in an oil press, whereafter I was transformed into oil and finally set aflame. After all this, was I not to attain a lofty position?’

The above-mentioned parable is an example which expounds that the people of God attain lofty ranks only after enduring trial and tribulation.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 25–26)

Virtuous Deeds are Never Wasted

I remember once reading about an old fire-worshipper of ninety years of age in *Tadhkiratul-Awliyā’*. It so happened that in a period of extended showers, the man was feeding seeds to the birds on the roof of his house. A noble man approached him and said: ‘Old man, what are you doing?’ He responded: ‘Brother, the rain has

been falling incessantly for six or seven days now and so I am feeding the birds some grain.'

'You do so in vain,' said the noble man, 'You are a disbeliever, what reward can you attain for such action?' The old man responded, 'I will surely receive my reward.'

The noble man relates that he went for Hajj and saw the same old man circuiting the Ka'bah from a distance. The noble man was astonished to see this and relates that when he approached him, the old man was first to say: 'Did my feeding seeds to the birds go in vain or have I received my reward?'

Now one ought to reflect that Allah the Almighty did not even waste the good deed of a disbeliever, then would He let the virtuous deed of a Muslim go in vain?

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 74)

Inviting a Noble

The word *muttaqī* [righteous] implies the abandonment of evil, while the word *muḥsin* alludes to the doing of good.

I have read an anecdote in this regard. A noble man invited someone to join him for food, and he made all the arrangements for his hospitality and truly did justice in this respect. When they had finished eating, the noble man said with great humility: 'I have not been able to serve you as you deserve.'

The guest responded: 'Indeed, you have done no favour upon me; in fact, it is I who have done a favour upon you, because when

you were engaged in your arrangements, I did not burn your house down. For what if I had set fire to your property, then what?’

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 179)

Three Pilgrimages

I remember a story of a worldly man who invited a holy man. When the holy man arrived for food, the host, who was an arrogant man of a worldly bent, said to his servant: ‘Bring such and such tray, which I brought back from my first Hajj.’ Then he said: ‘Bring the second tray as well, which I brought from my second Hajj.’ Then he proceeded to say: ‘Bring the one from the third Hajj as well.’

The holy man said: ‘You are deserving of immense pity. In these three sentences, you have ruined your three pilgrimages. Your only purpose in making these statements was to show that you have gone to pilgrimage three times.’

Therefore, God has taught that a person ought to control his tongue, and abstain from making useless, absurd, inappropriate, needless comments.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 422)

Action of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa

A person approached Ḥaḍrat Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allah have mercy on him) about their plans to build a mosque and asked him to contribute. Imām Abu Ḥanīfa excused that he cannot donate anything. In fact, he could have contributed a lot if he had wanted to.

That person insisted, ‘We do not want a lot from you; please contribute something just as a token.’

At last Imām Abū Ḥanīfa gave a pennyworth of a coin.

The person came back in the evening with the coin and said, ‘Sir! This coin came out to be fake.’

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa was overjoyed and said, ‘It is fantastic. In fact, I never wanted to donate anything. There are so many mosques around, and it appears that there is an extravagance.’

(Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 299)

Contentment

A person was riding a horse, and on the way, there was a beggar who was hardly wearing any clothes. He asked the beggar, ‘How are you, sir?’ The beggar exclaimed, ‘How would one be who has had all his wishes granted?’ The rider wondered how this person’s wishes had been fulfilled. The beggar said, ‘I abandoned all desires; it means they all have been fulfilled’.

In short, when you desire something, then you face challenges,

and when you become content, then it is like you have everything. This is [the key to] salvation and deliverance.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 422)

Forty Lamps

There is a famous story that a noble man hosted a feast. He illuminated forty oil lamps. Some people commented, ‘There should not be this much extravagance’. He replied, ‘Put out the lamp that I have lit in pretence’. People tried to put out the lamps, but not a single lamp could be extinguished.

It seems that though it is the same action that is carried out by two individuals, the act of one individual becomes evil whereas others deserve a reward from God. The difference between their intentions causes this difference.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 47)

Attraction of Piety

Human beings have an attraction for good and bad deeds. A man does good but does not understand why he has done so. Similarly, a person is inclined towards the evil deeds, and when asked as to why he is doing so, he cannot give any reason.

A story is given in *Mathnawī Rūmī* about this attraction [towards evil and good deeds]. There was a pious slave of an evil

master. One day early in the morning, the master, along with his slave left for the market to get groceries. On the way, the slave upon hearing Azan, took leave to offer Prayer in the mosque. He enjoyed being in the mosque and was delighted in his worship, and, therefore, after offering the Prayer, he engaged in the remembrance of Allah. Eventually, after some wait, his master called him asking who has restrained him inside the mosque. The servant replied: 'The same thing that is keeping you outside.'

That is, there is a particular attraction in both [good and evil deeds]. God has pointed towards this fact:

كُلُّ يَّعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ¹

(Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 141)

Death of a Believer

I know with certainty that the one who wholeheartedly develops a relationship with God never dies in disgrace.

The story of a pious person is scribed in books. He fervently prayed that he dies at Ṭūs.² He had also seen in a vision that he would die at Ṭūs. He fell seriously ill at some other place and lost hope of survival. He instructed his disciples that if dies there, they should bury him in a Jewish graveyard. His disciples asked for the

1. Everyone acts according to his own way (*Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:85). [Publisher]

2. Ṭūs is an ancient city in Razavi Khorasan Province in Iran near Mashhad. [Publisher]

reason for this request. He told them that he had prayed fervently for his death at Ṭūs. It looked like that his prayers had not been accepted and he did not intend to deceive Muslims [that he was a pious person]. However, he slowly recovered from his illness and went to Ṭūs, where he fell ill and was buried upon his demise.

One should become a believer like this. God does not give disgraceful death to a true believer.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 153)

Intention

It is written in a book that once Junaid^{rtā} of Baghdad thought of going on a journey. On further consideration, he could not think of a purpose and intent for the journey, so he abandoned the plan, but the urge to travel overtook him again. He could not overcome his desire and started his journey, thinking that God had inspired him to go on this journey and followed a route.

On his way, he saw a person lying under a tree in a miserable state. As soon as he saw Junaid, he said, ‘O Junaid! I have been waiting for you for a long time. Why have you taken so long?’ Junaid (may Allah’s mercy be on him) replied, ‘In reality, it was your attraction that repeatedly prompted me to take on this journey’.

Every undertaking has destiny ordained by God. If it is not fulfilled, then one does not feel gratified...

Embark on every journey for the sake of faith.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 306–307)

Watch Out for Attacks by Satan

It is narrated about a saint that when he was on his deathbed, his last words were ‘Not yet! Not yet!’ His disciple was very surprised to hear these words. He earnestly prayed to God so that he can understand what the matter was. One day the Saint met him in his dream. The disciple asked, ‘What were the meanings of your last words, and why did you say those words?’

The saint replied, ‘Satan assaults at the time of a man’s death to snatch his light of faith at the last moment. Satan also came to me and tried to subvert me. I did not allow any of his schemes to succeed. Satan said, you have escaped from his clutches’, and I said, ‘Not yet! Not yet! That is, I am not safe from you till my death.’

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 306)

Just A Little Matter

Arrogance and mischief are undesired traits. Good deeds of seventy years can be wasted due to a small mistake.

It is written that there was a pious man who lived on a mountain and it had not rained there for an extended period. One day as it rained it poured on rocks and stones as well.

An objection arose in his heart that the rain was needed for fields and orchards. Had it rained only on the fields, instead of rocks, it would have been much better.

On hearing this objection, God deprived him of his holiness. He was very sad and consulted another holy man.

The other holy man said, ‘Why did you object? You have been punished for this mistake’.

The pious man, who had received the punishment, asked someone to tie a rope to his legs and drag him on the rocks. That individual said, ‘Why should I do such a thing?’ The holy man said, ‘Do as I am asking you to do’. Eventually, that man gave in and dragged him on the rocks, his both legs were bruised. Then God said, ‘That is enough. You are now pardoned’...

Man should never raise objections against the Almighty God.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 57)

Humility and Meekness

God becomes the helper of those people who pray to Him with humility, hoping the acceptance of their meekness.

A pious man used to pray a lot to God to be free from sins. After lots of prayers, he wondered how he could attain a high level of humility. He learned that no one is humbler than a dog, so he started yelping like a dog. Another person thought that a dog had managed to come into the mosque who might make his utensils filthy. This individual looked around and found the pious man but did not find any dog. He said to the pious man that he had heard a dog yelping. The pious man said that it was he himself who was the dog. He was asked, ‘Why were you yelping like a dog?’ The pious man said, ‘The Almighty God likes humility, so I thought by acting like a dog, my humility may be accepted [by God].’

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 61)

The Virtuous and the Wretched

The Almighty God Himself provides wholesome things to the virtuous and gives impure things to the wretched...

A king hosted a pious man to a feast. The meat of goat was prepared as well as the pork. When the food was served, the pork dish was deliberately placed in front of the pious man whereas mutton was served to the king and his friends and an announcement was, then, made to start eating.

The Almighty God revealed the truth to the pious man, and he said that the distribution of food was not even. He swapped the dishes and also kept reciting the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ¹

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 73-74)

Selection of a Friend

A remarkable thing is written in a book. A man was walking on the road weeping. A man of God met him on the way and asked, 'Why are you crying?' He replied, 'My friend has passed away'. The man of God said, 'You should have pondered in advance. Why did you have a friendship with someone who was to die?'

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 22)

1. Bad things are for bad men (*Sūrah an-Nūr*, 24:27). [Publisher]

Why Did You Backbite

A saint had two disciples. One of them drank alcohol and fell unconscious in a gutter. The other complained to the saint. The saint said, ‘You are very insolent that you complain about him, and do not go and pick him up and take him home.’ The disciple went there immediately, picked up the drunkard and proceeded. When people saw this, they said that one drank excessively and the other drank a little less and is carrying the drunkard back home.

The saint wished to reproach him for backbiting on his brother.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 78)

Success in Difficulty

A narration is given in *Mathnawī* that once a sage had nothing to eat and he and his friends were hungry. A boy happened to pass by selling dessert. The sage ordered his friends to snatch the dish from the boy. They acted accordingly. The sage and his friends ate the dessert.

The boy wept and cried. His friends questioned the sage, ‘What was the wisdom in snatching the dish from a child’.

The sage said that dish was child’s total asset and he cried in extreme pain when he lost it. His painful cry resulted in relief from his difficulty and anguish that our prayers could not have

accomplished. The boy was, then, appeased by giving him more than his right.

Similarly, at times, one faces hardships so that he may expeditiously attain a status destined for him.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 7, p. 363–364)

Delhi is Still Far Away

One prays with full fervour when facing a difficulty; only then an extraordinary event is manifested.

It is said that a sage lived in Delhi. The king at the time became very angry with him. The king was going on an expedition and said that the sage would undoubtedly be hanged on his return. The king swore to take this action.

The friends and disciples of the sage became worried and sad as the time for the king's return neared and submitted to him that the king was about to return.

The sage replied, 'Delhi is still far away!'

As the king was one or two stops away, the friends again approached him, but he always said, 'Delhi is still far away!'

The king almost arrived at the city gates and was about to enter the city, even then the same response was repeated, 'Delhi is still far away!'

Suddenly the news spread that as the king approached the city gate, the gate collapsed on him and the king died. It seems that the sage had received some information from God.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 36–37)

For Your Sake

If a man becomes a believer in [the existence of] God and develops perfect faith, then he is never wasted. Instead, millions of lives are protected for his sake.

This story is about a person who was one of the men of God. He was travelling on a ship. A storm hit the sea, and the ship was about to sink, but it was saved due to the prayers of this man of God.

He received a revelation while he was praying, ‘We saved all of them for your sake’.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 10, p. 138)

Wrath of God on a King

Nothing is more effective than prayer...

There is a narration about Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn that once he came under severe wrath of a king. The king ordered, ‘Sheikh shall face severe punishment in a week’.

When the day of punishment arrived, Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn was napping using the thigh of his disciple as a pillow. The disciple wept as he thought about the order of the king. His tears fell on Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn, who got up and asked, ‘Why are you crying?’ The disciple submitted that it day was the day of your punishment. Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn replied, ‘Do not worry. I will not be punished. I just saw in a dream that a goring cow came to kill me, but I managed to grasp her both horns and made her fall’.

Incidentally, the king seriously fell ill on the same day and died with the same illness.

These are Godly interventions that humans cannot understand.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 37)

Death of a Beggar

Decent death is bestowed on those who are always ready to die.

It is a known well that Farīd-ud-Dīn ‘Attār (may Allah have mercy on him) was in the business of perfumery. One day early in the morning as he opened his shop, a beggar asked him for alms. He told the beggar that he had not made any money yet. The beggar said, ‘You are too engrossed in worldly affairs. How would you die?’ Farīd-ud-Dīn replied, ‘The same way as you’. On hearing this, the beggar lied down and recited: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ [lā-ilāha illallāh Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh—There is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah] and passed away there and then.

This incident deeply moved Farīd-ud-Dīn. He immediately gave away all in his shop [to the needy] and spent the rest of his life in the remembrance of Allah.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 51)

Do not go for Appearance

Dhun-Nūn al-Miṣrī was a very talented person. He was famous far and wide. A man went to his house to see him due to his fame and loudly called his name. Someone from the house responded, ‘God knows where he is gone. He may have gone to the market.’

The man went to the market looking for Dhun-Nūn who was shopping dressed in a simple ordinary manner. The man asked around for him and was pointed to Dhun-Nūn.

The person noticed that Dhun-Nūn was a dark, short person wearing very simple clothes, non-commanding standing in the market like an ordinary man.

The person who had come to meet Dhun-Nūn lost all his enthusiasm and said to Dhun-Nūn that he looked like an ordinary man. Dhun-Nūn asked him, ‘Why did you come to see me while you were thinking only about the looks?’

Dhun-Nūn had figured out visitor’s intentions and said, ‘You are looking for outward conditions and nothing beyond’.

Faith is protected when one keeps an eye on the soul.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 71–72)

Standard of a Miracle

I read an anecdote in *Tadhkiratul-Auliya* that there was a man who was suspicious of a pious man and considered the pious man as an imposter and a liar.

One day he went to the pious man and asked him to show

some miracle. The pious man said, 'My miracle is clearly visible. Though you associate all sorts of sins with me, yet you observe that God does not destroy me. The town of Lot was destroyed, so were the people of 'Ād and Thamūd, but I do not get the wrath of God. Is this not a miracle for you?'

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 395)

The Manifestation of Divine Power

Almighty Allah wants to show an illustration of His divine power...

He does so in a manner that no one expects it to happen. At times, this manifestation of divine power becomes a trial for many.

It is narrated that a pious man mentioned before his death that a green sparrow would appear after his burial. That sparrow will sit on someone's head, and that person will be his successor.

After the burial had taken place, everyone waited for the arrival of the sparrow. Every high-ranking stalwart and long-time follower thought that the sparrow would sit on his head. After a short time, a sparrow appeared. It sat on the head of a grocer who happened to join the funeral service.

Everyone was astonished, and according to the wishes of their spiritual leader, the grocer was made the successor of the pious man.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 407)

Blessings of a Father's Good Deed

I believe that if a man is Godly and genuinely righteous, his seven generations get mercy and blessings of God and are protected by Him.

Once Ḥaḍrat Mūsā (peace be upon him) was delivering a sermon, someone asked him whether there was anyone more knowledgeable than him. Mūsā^{as} replied, 'I do not know'. God did not like the response given by Mūsā. He should have said that there are many men of God, and every one of them excels in knowledge.

God ordered him to go towards a particular place where his fish will become alive and where he will meet a knowledgeable person. As he went to the place, he left his fish somewhere. He went back to get his fish but was unable to locate it. He stayed at that place. He came across a man of God. Mūsā^{as} asked him, 'Can I follow you to attain knowledge and wisdom?'

The pious man replied, 'You are permitted to follow, but you will not be able to protect yourself from doubt. It is difficult to show patience when the reality of a situation is not known or understood. It is seen that doubt takes root on an unexpected action'. Mūsā (peace be upon him) said, 'I will not doubt and will trust you'. The pious person advised him not to question him during the journey.

Both of them started their journey.

They saw a wall which was about to collapse. This wall belonged to two orphans, and a treasure was buried under the wall. It was feared that with the collapse of the wall that treasure will be exposed and people will grab it, while the orphans who were still

young would be left with nothing. Therefore, God appointed the two prophets to repair the wall.

They restored the wall so that orphans could use the treasure upon reaching adulthood. What was the reason for sending two great men of God? The reason for sending them was that the father of the orphan children was a pious person. The reward of the righteousness of a father was that two great prophets, Khidr^{as} and Musa^{as}, were made labourer.

One can deduct from this as to what was the status of that person for whom prophets were sent to protect the treasure so that his offspring has access to the treasure when they grow up. It seems from the words of God that the two boys for whom Ḥaḍrat Khidr inconvenienced himself were not going to be of a good character, but in the knowledge of God they probably were to go on the wrong path and were to develop bad habits. God, due to His attribute of covering faults of people, kept their character a secret and only manifested the piety of their father, and did not elaborate on their condition that in reality was not commendable and for the sake of a friend had mercy on the unfriendly.

Observe how God took care of the progeny of a pious man and observe how a person continues to fall but fails to care for the Almighty God. It is evident from this narrative that those who maintain relationships with God under all circumstances, the Almighty God saves them from going to waste.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 245; see also Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 337; see also Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 68; see also Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 127, 2008 edition)¹

1. There are slight differences in the narrations given in the references. These narrations have been consolidated in this version. [Publisher]

Condition of prayer

It is quoted in *Tadhkiratul-Auliya'* that someone requested a pious man to pray for him. The pious man asked him to bring a dish of rice and milk. The man wondered [about the strange request] but brought the requested food.

The pious man prayed, and that individual's wish was granted. Eventually, the person requesting prayers was told that pious man asked for the food to develop a connection with him.

A similar narrative is given in the memoirs of Bawa Farīd. A person lost the deed to his property, and he approached Bawa Farīd requesting prayers. Bawa Fareed said, 'Feed me Halva'. The person asking for the prayer went to buy Halva at a confectioner's shop and found his lost deed there.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 24)

Weapon of Prayers

It is said that once a king started his expedition to invade some country. On the way, a pious man held the reigns of the king's horse and said, 'Do not go forward, or I shall fight you'. The king was surprised [by this challenge] and asked, 'You have no means to fight. How will you fight me?' The pious person replied, 'I will fight you by the weapon of morning prayers'. The king said, 'I cannot fight with you'. The king abandoned his expedition and returned.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 27)

Prayers with Fervour

One of the principles of prayer is that it is impossible to have necessary fervour, empathy, and deep concentration, in prayer unless one has good relations with the person who asks for the prayer.

It is mentioned about a saint that once he was travelling and a boy fell in front of him and fractured his leg. It created anguish in the saint's heart. He prayed and requested God to heal the boy's leg saying why did otherwise He created agony in his [saint's] heart.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 49)

A Way of Bonding

It is narrated that a person requested Syed Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn, a saint, for prayers for a personal matter. Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn said, 'Bring rice and milk for me'.

The person thought in his heart, 'What a strange saint! I have come to him to present my need, and he has asked me to fulfil his desire'. However, the man went home and came back with the dessert of rice and milk. After eating the dessert, Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn prayed for him, and this man's issue was resolved.

Nizām-ud-Dīn then explained to the man, 'I asked for the milk and rice dessert from you because when you came to me with your request, you were a stranger to me. I had no reason to have sympathy for you. I thought of this method to develop a relationship with you'.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 50)

One Method of Acceptance of Prayer

At time prayers are not accepted. At such times one method of acceptance of prayers is requesting a pious person to pray for you, and praying to God, the Almighty to accept the prayers of that pious person...

Once Bawa Ghulām Farīd fell ill and prayed, but did not see any improvement in his health. Then he asked one of his disciples to pray for him. His disciple (perhaps Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn^{ra} or Khawaja Qutb-ud-Dīn^{ra}), who was a very noble and pious individual, prayed fervently but there was no change. Upon this, Bawa Fareed prayed passionately one night: ‘O God! Grant the highest degree of acceptance of prayers to my disciple so that his prayers are accepted by You’.

In the morning, he told his disciple about his prayer. On hearing this, his disciple developed great sympathy and thought in his heart, ‘As he has prayed for me in this manner, so let me start praying for him’. He prayed so earnestly and with such vigour that Bawa Ghulam Fareed fully recovered.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 9, p. 234)

Eagerness to Earn Blessings

In the era of Alamgīr, the Shāhī Mosque caught fire. The people made haste and ran to the noble King and submitted that the mosque had gone up in flames.

Upon hearing this news, the King immediately fell into

prostration and thanked God. The King's courtiers inquired in surprise: 'Your Noble Majesty! What time is this for thankfulness? The house of God has caught fire and the hearts of the Muslims are in immense pain.'

The King responded: 'I have been thinking and yearning for quite some time that this grand and magnificently built mosque is benefiting thousands of people, if only there was some way that I too could have a part in this good work. However, whenever I looked at this mosque, I would find it to be complete and flawless in every aspect, and so nothing would come to mind as to how I could partake of spiritual reward in this regard. So today, God the Almighty has opened a way for me by which I too can attain spiritual reward.'

وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ¹

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 387)

Avoid Show-off

I tell you truthfully that you will not find a person better than a man of God who does a good deed and wishes that no one knows about it.

I have read a story about a divine in *Tadhkiratul-Auliya'* that there was a divine in need. He delivered a sermon, during which

1. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (*Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:225).
[Publisher]

he also said that he needed some money. 'I need funds for religious purposes, but there is no money. I seek help from someone.'

Listening to the divine's sermon and the need for funds for religious work, and considering him a righteous person, a person donated ten thousand rupees. The divine collected the money and greatly praised him for his generosity and benevolence. He said, 'God shall greatly reward this person.'

Hearing these comments, the donor felt saddened that as he had been praised in this world, he might be deprived of the reward on the Day of Judgment. He left the gathering but returned after a short while and proclaimed, 'I made a mistake in giving you the money as was not mine. In fact, it belonged to my mother and I was not entitled to spend it. I had brought the money without her permission, and she does not want to donate it. She is demanding her money, and therefore, please return me the donated amount.'

The divine returned the money. However, people in the gathering denounced the donor. They said that it seemed that there was an ill intention. 'It looks like he became emotional on hearing the sermon and donated the money. Now, the love of money has made him change his mind, and he has made a lame excuse'. Anyway, the donor took his money and left.

A short while ago people were praising him, and now they were denouncing him, saying that he was unwise. 'Why he did not ask his mother for the money before coming here'. Some said that he was a liar; he felt terrible after donating the money and fabricated this excuse, etc., The meeting concluded, and the divine also left.

Time passed, and it was dead of the night. The donor quietly

arrived again at the house of the divine at two in the morning. He awoke him from sleep, gave him the same ten thousand rupees, and submitted that the money was donated for the sake of God and not to seek any praise from you. 'You openly praised me and deprived me of the reward on the Day of Judgment. It was not my intention. I resolved to shun temptations of the devil and made an excuse. This money is yours, but my name should not be mentioned to anyone. Now I ask you to swear that you will not mention this donation till death'. On hearing this, the religious man started weeping.

The donor asked, 'Why did you weep'. He replied, 'I wept because of your keeping the matter secret, you will be criticized as long as these people are around. Everyone knows what happened yesterday, but no one knows that you returned it to me. They are unaware of the reality which you have asked not to disclose', the divine said. The donor replied, 'I am happy to accept these curses as I want to avoid hypocrisy', and left.

Eventually, God disclosed the entire story to the public. God gives respect to those who secretly develop a friendship with Him.

A righteous person fights with his inciting self and tries to hide his [good] deeds. He keeps his good deeds secret but God always discloses such secrets.

A wicked person wants to hide his evil deeds after committing them, similarly, a righteous man worships in secret, and fears that no one sees him. A truly righteous desires a kind of secrecy. Righteousness has many degrees and it requires inconvenience, and the righteous are always in a state of war, but a pious has

finished this battle. As I have mentioned above about show-off as an example, a righteous person has to fight it at all times.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 335–336; see also Malfūzāt, vol. 8, p. 389–390; see also Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 22–23; see also Malfūzāt, vol. 10 p. 409)¹

When God Wills

When God desires to get some work done by someone, He grabs his neck and makes him do so. God works in mysterious ways to have His will accepted.

There is a story about a Muslim king. The king put Imām Mūsā Riḍā (may Allah’s mercy be on him) behind bars for some reason. By God’s divine power, one night, the king summoned his prime minister at midnight and gave strict orders for the minister to present himself in whatever condition he is in. The king further instructed, ‘It is forbidden for you even to change clothes’.

The minister hurriedly arrived without even wearing his cap and shirt. He asked the king, ‘What is the reason for this hurry and panic?’

The king narrated his dream to him. ‘I have seen in a dream that a black person came and threatened and intimidated me with an axe. He looked were very scary and fearsome, and asked me to free Imām Mūsā immediately otherwise he will kill me. He also asked me to give Imām Mūsā Riḍā one thousand gold coins, and

1. There are slight differences in the narrations given in the references. These narrations have been consolidated in this version. [Publisher]

allow him to settle wherever he likes. Therefore, go right now and release Imām Mūsā Riḍā from the prison’.

The prime minister went to the prison, and before he could mention his reason for being there, Imām Mūsā Riḍā said, ‘You must hear my dream before you say anything.’ he related his dream thus, ‘God gave me the glad tidings that I will be set free today before it is morning’.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 10, p. 187)

Converting a Thief into a Saint

Righteousness fills others, too, with awe and the Almighty God does not waste those who are pious.

Syed ‘Abdul-Qādir Jīlānī^{rtā}, may Allah have mercy on him, was an illustrious saint who had a very pure soul. I read in a book that on one occasion he told his mother that his heart was greatly dismayed by the world. ‘It is my desire to search for a leader who can show me the ways of attaining tranquillity and comfort’, he said.

When his mother observed that her son was not interested in worldly matters, she agreed and said: ‘Alright, I relieve you.’ After saying this, she went inside and returned with eighty coins that she had saved. Then she said, ‘Of these coins, in accordance with the Islamic shariah, forty belong to you and forty to your elder brother. And so I give you your share of forty coins.’

Then, she sewed the forty coins into the underarm of his shirt and advised him to take out the coins upon reaching a safe destination and to use them as he so required. Syed ‘Abdul-Qādir^{rtā}

requested his mother to give him some advice. ‘Do not ever lie my son’, she said, ‘This will bring with it immense blessing.’

With this advice, he embarked on his quest. It so happened that there were some robbers and pillagers who lived in the jungle that he passed through, who would loot travellers. These robbers spotted ‘Abdul-Qādir Jīlāni^{rtā} from afar and when they came close, they found a simple ascetic.

One of them mockingly inquired: ‘Do you have anything in your possession?’ A short time ago, ‘Abdul-Qādir had heard the advice to not speak falsehood, and so he immediately said: ‘Yes, there are forty coins in my underarm, which my mother has sewn to my shirt as a pouch.’ The first robber thought that he was only retorting sarcastically. But when the second robber inquired the same, he gave the same response. Hence, ‘Abdul-Qādir Jīlāni^{rtā} responded to every robber in the same manner, who were astonished that we have never seen such a truthful person. They, then, took him to their leader and narrated all the account.

When the leader questioned him, he got the same response. Upon this, he ordered to search his clothes. When they searched him, the robbers found forty coins. They were astonished that this was some strange person, and that they had never seen such an individual before. The leader inquired: ‘What is the reason behind you revealing the whereabouts of your wealth?’

‘I have set out to seek religious knowledge,’ said ‘Abdul-Qādir Jīlāni^{rtā}, ‘and my mother advised me to never speak falsehood; this was my first test, so why would I lie? I would have achieved nothing if I had lied at my first stop, and therefore, I did not leave the truthfulness.’

Upon hearing this, the leader of the robbers began to weep and

said: 'Alas! I did not obey God even once.' The leader addressed the other thieves and said: 'These words and the steadfastness of this person have transformed me. I cannot be a part of you. I repent.' At this, the other robbers repented as well.

I believe that the legendary 'making saints out of thieves' refers to this very incident. Hence, Syed 'Abdul-Qādir Jīlānī¹ states that the first people who repented on his hand were thieves.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 79–80; see also Malfūzāt p. 369–370)¹

Consolation by a King

It is written in a booklet that a king used to write the Qur'ānic text. A cleric pointed out that a particular verse was miswritten. The king drew a circle around that verse and said that it would be rectified. When the cleric left, the king removed the circle. When asked why he did so. The king said that, in fact, the cleric was wrong. I drew a circle to make him happy. Note that despite being a king, he did not want to hurt a lowly cleric.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 342)

1. This narration is given in two places in Malfūzāt vol. I with varying details. These narrations have been combined here. [Publisher]

Do not Rush to Suspicion

It is not possible for a human being to know the inner state of another person and he cannot know all secrets of someone's heart. Therefore, one should not form an opinion about others in haste but should wait with patience. A person deems someone evil, but he himself then becomes worst than that person.

It is narrated that a pious person promised to God that he would consider everyone better than himself, and he would not consider anyone less than himself. People do suggest such things to please their loved ones.

One day as he arrived at the river bank, he saw a man having food with a young lady. He had a bottle in his hand, and he kept drinking from it and was also serving drinks to the lady.

Upon seeing this from some distance, the pious man thought ill of them that although I have pledged that I shall not consider myself better than anyone, but I am certainly better than these two.

Suddenly there came a storm in the river and a boat capsized along with passengers. The same man who was eating with the lady got up and rescued six of the passengers.

Then he addressed the person who was thinking ill of him stating, 'You consider yourself better than me; I have rescued six of them, now you should go and save the one last person.'

He was astonished and asked who did you read my mind. The person replied: 'God had sent me to test you and informed me about your intentions. There is river water in the bottle and not wine, the woman is my mother and I am her only son. She looks young due to her good health. God had appointed me to give you a lesson.'

It is essential not to judge others hastily.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 248–249, vol. 4, p. 265–266)

Cognition of God

It is narrated in books of history that once a man came to Abul-Ḥasan Kharqāni. On his return, the man confronted a lion to which he said: ‘For the sake of Allah clear my way.’ The lion attacked. But then the man said: ‘Leave me for the sake of Abul-Ḥasan’, and the lion left him.

This event disturbed him spiritually, and he turned back from his journey. Upon returning, he narrated this mystery to Abul-Hasan who said: ‘This is not a difficult matter. You were not actually acquainted with Allah’s name. The true majesty and awe of Allah was not present in your heart. But as for me, you knew me well and in your heart you held me in high regard.’

Hence, there are many a great blessing and merit in Allah’s name, provided that one gives it a place in the heart and seeks to learn its deeper essence.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 102)

Perseverance

Those people who are impatient fall into the clutches of Satan. A righteous person must battle with impatience as well.

In *Būstān* there is mention of a worshipper. Whenever this individual stood for worship, he would a voice from the unseen saying: ‘You have been rejected and forsaken.’ On a certain occasion, one of his disciples heard this voice and said: ‘Now the verdict has been passed. What then is the use of futile action?’

The man wept profusely and said: ‘If I am to leave God, where else should I go? If accursed I am, then so be it. At least I am fortunate enough to be called accursed.’ These discussions were still underway with his disciple, when a voice was heard saying: ‘You have been accepted.’

So all this was the result of sincerity and patience, which is a condition for one who is righteous.

(Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 24)

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Please note that, in the translation that follows, words given in parentheses () are the words of the author. If any explanatory words or phrases are added by the translators for the purpose of clarification, they are put in square brackets []. Footnotes given by the publisher are marked '[Publisher]'.

References to the Holy Quran contain the name of the *sūrah* [i.e. chapter] followed by a chapter:verse citation, e.g. *Sūrah al-Jumu'ah*, 62:4, and count *Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm* ['In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful'] as the first verse in every chapter that begins with it.

The following abbreviations have been used:

ṣas *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, meaning 'peace and blessings of Allah be upon him', is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{ṣas}.

as *'alaihis-salām*, meaning 'peace be on him', is written after the names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{ṣas}.

ra *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhū/‘anhā/‘anhūm*, meaning ‘may Allah be pleased with him/her/them’, is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} or of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

rta *rahmatullāh ‘alaiḥ/‘alaiḥā/‘alaihim*, meaning ‘may Allah shower His mercy upon him/her/them’, is written after the names of those deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} or of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

aba *ayyadahullāhu Ta‘āla binaṣriḥil-‘Azīz*, meaning ‘may Allah the Almighty help him with His powerful support’, is written after the name of the present head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V.

Readers are urged to recite the full salutations when reading the book. In general, we have adopted the following system established by the Royal Asiatic Society for our transliteration.

- ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word *honour*.
- ث *th* – pronounced like *th* in the English word *thing*.
- ح *ḥ* – a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.
- خ *kh* – pronounced like the Scottish *ch* in *loch*.
- ذ *dh* – pronounced like the English *th* in *that*.
- ص *ṣ* – strongly articulated *s*.

- ض *ḏ* – similar to the English *th* in *this*.
 ط *ṭ* – strongly articulated palatal *t*.
 ظ *ẓ* – strongly articulated *z*.
 ع ‘ – a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
 غ *gh* – a sound similar to the French *r* in *grasseye*, and to the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the ‘gargling’ position to pronounce it.
 ق *q* – a deep guttural *k* sound.
 ء ‘ – a sort of catch in the voice.

Long vowels by:

- ā* for ———¹ or 1̄ (like *a* in *father*).
ī for ى ——— or ———¹ (like *ee* in *deep*).
ū for و ———¹ (like *oo* in *root*).

Other vowels by:

- ai* for ى ———¹ (like *i* in *site*).
au for و ———¹ (resembling *ou* in *sound*).

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe. As noted above, the single quotation mark ‘ is used for transliterating ع which is distinct from the apostrophe ’ used for ء.

GLOSSARY

Abul-Ḥasan Kharqānī: A Muslim religious scholar of Iran (AD 963-1033).

Batala: A town in Punjab, India.

Bawa (Baba) Ghulām Farīd: He was a Saraikī (a regional language of Panjab) poet of the Indian subcontinent (1845-1901). He knew several languages. His works include *Dīwān-e-Farīd* (collection of 272 poems in Saraikī).

Bāyazīd: A Muslim Saint Abū Yazīd Ṭaifūr b. ʿĪsā b. Surūshān al-Basṭāmī (804-874), commonly known in the Iranian world as Bāyazīd Basṭāmī, was a Persian Sufi from north-central Iran.

Būstān: Name of a Persian book literally meaning ‘garden’ written by Sa’dī.

Dhūn-Nūn al-Miṣrī: Dhūn-Nūn Abul-Faiḍ Thaubbān b. Ibrāhīm al-Miṣrī (796-859) was an Egyptian Muslim mystic and ascetic. He

studied the scholastic disciplines of alchemy, medicine, and Greek philosophy.

Farīd-ud-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār: Abū Ḥamīd bin Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm (c. 1145 – c. 1221), better known by his pen-names Farīd-ud-Dīn and ‘Aṭṭār (perfumer), was a Persian Muslim poet, theoretician of Sufism, and hagiographer from Nishapur who had an immense and lasting influence on Persian poetry and Sufism. *Mantiq-ut-tair* (The Conference of the Birds) and *Ilāhī-Nāma* (The Book of Divine) are among his most famous works.

Galen: He was a physician, surgeon, and philosopher in the Roman Empire (AD 129-200). He is known as the most accomplished medical researcher of antiquity. He developed various scientific disciplines like Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Pharmacology, and Neurology.

Gulistān: Persian book written by Sa'dī, literally meaning garden.

Halvah: A traditional sweet dish made of semolina.

Hārūn al-Rashīd: Fifth Abbasid king and Caliph, AD 766-809. He ruled from 786 to 809. He established the legendary library Bait-al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad, Iraq.

Imām Abū Hanīfa: Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Thābit b. Zūṭā b. Marzubān (699-767 CE) was an eighth-century Muslim theologian and jurist of Persian origin. He founded the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence. He was a great Muslim scholar and saint. His works include *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar*.

Imām Mūsā Riḍā: 'Alī ibn Mūsā ar-Riḍā (766-818) was the eighth Shia Imam.

Junaid Baghdādī: He was a Persian mystic (835-910) and one of the most famous early Islamic saints. He taught in Baghdad throughout his lifetime and was an important figure in the development of Sufi doctrine.

Khawājah Mu'in-ud-Dīn Chishtī: Chishtī Mu'in al-Dīn Hasan Si-jī (1143-1236 CE) was a Persian

Muslim preacher, ascetic, religious scholar, philosopher, and mystic. He settled in the Indian subcontinent in the thirteenth century, where he promulgated the famous Chistiyyah Order of Sunni mysticism. He allowed his followers to incorporate the 'use of music' in their devotions. He arrived in Delhi during the reign of the Sultan Iltutmish. Later he moved to Ajmer, India. His tomb is visited daily by many tourists and religious figures.

Khawājah Quṭb-ud-Dīn: Quṭbul Aqṭāb Khawāja Sayyid Muhammad Bakhtiyār Al-Ḥussainī Quṭbuddīn Bakhtiār Kākī (1173-1235) was a Muslim Sufi mystic, saint, and scholar of the Chishti Order from Delhi, India. He is followed in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Several rulers of the Mughal dynasty of South Asia were Chishti followers.

King Mahmood: Mahmood of Ghazni (971-1030) was the first independent ruler of the Turkic dynasty of Ghaznavids. His capital Ghazni evolved into a significant cultural, commercial, and intellectual centre in the Islamic World. This capital appealed to many prominent figures such as al-Biruni and Firdausi.

Malfūzāt: The auspicious verbal narratives of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be upon him), the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. From time to time, he presented these narratives in his blessed meetings and gatherings.

Mathnawī Rūmī: A book written by Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (1207-1273), a Muslim poet, faqīh, scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic. His poems have been widely translated into many of the world's languages. Most of his works are written in Persian.

Mūsā: Ḥaḍrat Mūsā [Moses] is a Prophet of Allah.

Nawāb: A ruling prince or powerful landowner in the Indian subcontinent.

Nawāb Muhammad Ali Khan: A companion of the Promised Messiah from Malerkotla, a city and municipal council in Sangrur district in the Indian state of Punjab.

Nosherwan: A Persian king from 531 to 579.

Philip Sidney: A British soldier.

Plato: He was an Athenian philosopher (428-348 BC) and founder

of the Platonist school of thought, and the Academy, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. He is widely considered the pivotal figure in the history of Ancient Greek and Western philosophy, along with his teacher, Socrates, and his most famous student, Aristotle.

Qadian: A city in Punjab, India. Hometown of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him).

Sheikh Nizām-ud-Dīn (1238-1325): He was a Muslim scholar and saint who lived in India.

Sheikh Sa'dī: Abū-Muhammad Muṣliḥ al-Dīn bin Abdallāh Shīrāzī (1210-1291) is known by his pen name Sa'dī. He was a prominent Persian poet and prose writer of the medieval period. He is recognized for the quality of his writings and the depth of his social and moral thoughts. *Būstān* is considered one of the 100 greatest books of all time, according to The Guardian.

Sharī'ah: The word 'Sharī'ah' literally means 'a way'. In Islamic terminology, it means the legal system of Islam.

Syed ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Jilānī: A great Sunni Muslim scholar and Saint (AD 1077-1166), was born south of the Caspian Sea in the area of Gilan in the northern Persia. His writings and his explanation of how to reach the apex of piety and see success in human spiritual endeavour serve as guiding light to a great multitude. *Futūḥ al-Ghaib* (exposure of the unseen) is one of his works.

Tadhkiratul-Auliya’: A book mentioning stories and incidents of sub-continent Muslim Saints.

Ṭūs: Ṭus (Persian: طوس or توس Tus or Tuws), also spelt as Tous, Toos, or Ṭūs, is an ancient city in Razavi Khorasan Province in Iran near Mashhad.

Wāqi‘āt-e-Shirīn: Pleasant Anecdotes.

Zutphen Fort: A fort in Holland.